

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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R 100948Z MAR 76

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2960

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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SUBJECT: ZAMBIAN - ISRAELI RELATIONS

1. IN MARCH 6 CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENTIAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER MARK CHONA ON OTHER SUBJECTS, AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE PREVIOUS DAY ON MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT ESTIMATES DURING WHICH ONE MP URGED MINISTRY TO DISMISS "CHEAP EXPATRIATES" FROM POOR COUNTRIES WHO WERE USELESS AND TO BRING BACK ISRAELI AGRICULTURAL EXPERTS. CHONA SAID ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT (GRZ) REALLY DID REGRET DEPARTURE OF ISRAELIS IN 1973 AND IS HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS. HE HOPED USG WOULD GET MESSAGE TO ISRAEL THAT IF LATTER WERE APPROACHED BY GRZ FOR HELP, ISRAELIS SHOULD RESPOND AFFIRMATIVELY. ZAMBIAN NEED FOR AGRICULTURAL HELP IS SO URGENT AND ISRAELI COMPETENCE SO WELL ACKNOWLEDGED, CHONA SAID, GRZ HOPED ISRAELIS WOULD NOT SAY NO IF REQUEST CAME EVEN BEFORE STEPS TAKEN TO RE-ESTABLISH AND NORMALIZE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. "WE NEED DE FACTO RELATIONS," CHONA SAID.

2. COMMENT: CHONA'S REMARKS INDICATE ZAMBIANS MAY BE REASSESSING THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD ISRAEL IN LIGHT OF THEIR SERIOUS ECONOMIC SITUATION AND THEIR DESIRE TO DO SOMETHING TO IMPROVE FALTERING
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RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. ZAMBIAN PRESS IN RECENT MONTHS HAS

SEVERAL TIMES CALLED ATTENTION TO DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES OF FORMERLY FLOURISHING ISRAELI-MANAGED POULTRY COOPERATIVE WHICH IS NOW VIRTUALLY BANKRUPT SINCE DEPARTURE OF ISRAELI TECHNICIANS. ALSO, CHONA SPOKE OF NEEDED HELP WITH FRUIT TREES. WHILE ZAMBIANS MAY WANT TO HAVE ISRAELI TECHNICIANS QUIETLY RETURN AT SOME EARLY DATE, WE SUSPECT THEY WILL TRY PUT OFF TO FUTURE QUESTION OF RESUMING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. REASONING FOR THIS IS LIKELY TO BE (A) DESIRE NOT TO BE FIRST TO BREAK RANKS WITH OAU POSITION TOWARD ISRAEL ADOPTED IN OCTOBER 1973; (B) CONTINUED HOPES OF OBTAINING SUBSTANTIAL CASH AID FROM ARAB OIL PRODUCERS; AND (C) NEED FOR SOME FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD A MIDEAST SETTLEMENT THAT ZAMBIA COULD CITE AS RATIONALE FOR RETREATING FROM STAND TAKEN ON "PRINCIPLE" AT TIME OF YOM KIPPUR WAR.

3. ASSUME DEPARTMENT WILL INDICATE WHETHER IT HAS RESERVATIONS, IF ANY, TO EMBASSY TEL AVIV TAKING ACTION AT APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY TO CONVEY CHONA REMARKS TO ISRAELIS. ALSO, WE ASSUME ISRAELIS STILL HAVE MEANS WHICH THEY MIGHT USE TO COMMUNICATE WITH CHONA DIRECTLY SHOULD THEY WISH TO SOUND OUT ZAMBIANS FURTHER ABOUT WAYS IN WHICH RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES MIGHT BE IMPROVED.

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